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go to the credit of that process, to which the greater quantity was applied. There is another circumstance which makes the statement in question not fairly comparable; viz. that as the ploughing and harrowing of the drill crop are not charged, because, "they would be given the land had it been a fallow;" for the same reason, the lazy-bed mode should have been charged only with whatever expense was bestowed on it in labour for the potatoes, more than would have been bestowed had it been a fallow. How the Farmer could make such a mistake as to imagine that the last statement was a fair one for *one acre*, I am at a loss to conjecture; perhaps it arose from his taking it for granted that it was so, because the author expressly *says* "he has given it for one acre only;" I also might have been deceived by this assertion, had I not observed in the *next lines*, the words, "here we have *eight acres* highly dressed for a subsequent crop." It is true, he *says*, "with the same quantity of dung as the one acre," it is, however, a fact, that he has *charged eight times* the quantity." Certainly, no person who is acquainted with the expense of planting potatoes with the spade, can think that eight acres could be done in that way for 2*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.* I am in doubt whether *one* acre be done generally for that sum, indeed I am inclined to think the expenses on the *drill* method are also underrated. You have the "Farmer's," and my opinion on anonymous communications, and you will, I have no doubt, "know what value to set upon them," and while I acknowledge that, "the value of communications ought to be estimated by the importance of the subjects, and the soundness of the reasoning employed, and not by the name of the author," I hope I may be allowed to entertain the opinion that, *unimportant* subjects, and *unsound* reasoning are more likely to come from the anonymous writer, than from him who gives his name; for this plain reason, that the latter will be more wary, as *he may lose his reputation* as well as have his feelings wounded, while the former can sustain only *one* of those mortifications. On subjects of agriculture, the name and place of abode of a writer are particularly useful, the farmer who is about adopting any system recommended, wants to be satisfied in a thousand particulars, which the author may not have noticed; many of your readers who would ride miles for such information, would not put pen to paper to obtain it; more value would be set on five minutes' *conversation* with the person recommending any system, than on volumes of book-information; in saying this I take it for granted "book-farming" is esteemed in this country, as little as it is in England. Although "The Farmer's Magazine, principally composed of anonymous pieces, is held in great estimation, and has materially served the cause of agriculture," it does not follow that it would not have been in *higher* estimation, and have still more served the cause of agriculture, had it not contained so many anonymous communications. Lest the "Farmer" should fancy I am a favourer of the lazy-bed mode, in preference to the drill one, I assure him I am not; it will not be easy to bring an Englishman to prefer the former, at least if profit be his object; but I find the prevailing opinion is, that if the *palate* only be consulted; the lazy-bed mode should be practised. I am Sir, your obedient servant, WM. GOOCH.

Castle-Upton, April 1809.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,

AS the life of BOYSE, the poet, may not happen to be universally known, and as the detail of the errors of his life, and the consequences attendant on them, may probably be an useful caution somewhere, I hope you will allow them a place in your valuable Miscellany. I am, Sir,

Your constant reader, W.

Newry, Dec. 10, 1808.

SAMUEL BOYSE, was the son of Joseph Boyse, a respectable dissenting

clergyman, who resided in Dublin at the commencement of the last century, and was during that period much celebrated for the controversy he carried on with King, the then Archbishop of Dublin, on episcopal authority. The son, Samuel, the subject of this memoir, was born in the metropolis, in the year 1708, where, under the protection of his father, he received the rudiments of his education, and at the age of eighteen was sent to Scotland, to qualify him, as it is to be presumed, for the same profession adopted by his father. Unhappily for young Boyse, he had not been a year in Scotland, when he was inveigled into a matrimonial connection with the daughter of an humble tradesman in the city of Glasgow, by which, in the first instance, he was completely disqualified from pursuing his necessary studies in any of the universities. To add to the difficulties of his situation, by the profligacy and extravagance of his wife, and her sister, who lived with them, he soon became so involved in his circumstances, as to be obliged to quit Scotland abruptly, and again to seek the asylum afforded to him by his father, whither he was accompanied by his wife and his sister-in-law. It is natural to suppose, that between a man, such as the elder Boyse is represented to have been, and such persons as those who accompanied his son from Scotland, there could exist but little harmony; but such was the simplicity of the one, and the refined duplicity of the other, that no circumstances, however glaring, were sufficient, to open the eyes of old Boyse. His affection to his son and his daughter-in-law continued undiminished till his death, though he had disposed of a paternal property in Yorkshire, to support their extravagance, and was in his last illness indebted to the good-nature of his congregation for the common necessaries of life, and at his death was buried at their expense.

After this period, few traces of Samuel's life worth noticing are to be met with, till the year 1731, when he emerged from his obscurity, and attracted the notice of many of the literary characters in Scotland (to which place he had returned) by the publication of a small volume of poems, and which he dedicated to the Countess of Eglenton, a woman of refined taste, a general patroness of literature, and a steady and cordial friend to Boyse, during his residence in Scotland. Could the favourable reception of these effusions of his genius have operated in correcting the errors of his system of life, he might have bid fair to have reckoned the more valuable members of society amongst his friends, as we find that even with all his profligacy he contrived to secure the patronage of some of the first characters in the kingdom. On the death of Lady Stormont he drew the attention of Lord Stormont by the publication of an elegant copy of verses in praise of the deceased, entitled *The Tears of the Muses.* Unlike many elegies of the same stamp, it possessed one qualification seldom found—*truth.* As Lady Stormont was a female of unusual endowments, and a generous patroness of poetical merit, Boyse was liberally rewarded for this well-merited tribute of praise; and was likewise by this means recommended to the notice of the Dutchess of Gordon. This lady was so deeply interested in favour of Boyse, that she undertook to procure him a civil employment, and for this purpose furnished him with a recommendatory letter to one of the Commissioners of Customs, as a person qualified to fill a situation at that time vacant. Of this letter, however, he made no advantage, as, from a thoughtlessness which attended all his actions, he neglected to present it till the application was too late to enable the Commissioner to grant the request which it contained. A repetition of such conduct, together with his general irregularity of life, soon brought him into universal contempt, and wearied the friendship even of those who were the warmest admirers of his poetical talent. At length finding it impossible to remain any longer in Edinburgh, he took the resolution of trying his fortune in London. On this occasion, the Dutchess of Gordon, and Lord Stormont, once more interested themselves in his favour, and furnished him with introductory letters to Mr. Pope, and some persons of the first respectability in England: with these recommendations he privately decamp-

ed from Edinburgh, to avoid the importunity of his creditors. On his arrival in London, he went to Twickenham to deliver the letters of introduction to Pope; but as he happened not to be at home at the time, Boyse abandoned the idea of making a second application; and in this manner he relinquished the advantages he might otherwise have reaped from the kindness of his friends in Edinburgh. Thus shut out from respectable society, he sunk into that mode of life to which he had a natural propensity. He frequented the society of none but the lowest dregs of the people, and never showed any inclination to renew his acquaintance with those who could be of service to him, unless when stimulated to it by severity of distress; his applications, however, were always made by letters, penned in the most abject terms; and what he acquired by his mendicant epistles, was spent in the next tavern, where he generally ordered the most delicious viands and the most expensive wines, which he enjoyed by himself, at the moment that his wife and unfortunate offspring were perishing of want!

A life like Boyse's, supported by eleemosinary means, and these too irregularly supplied, could scarcely be supposed to have promised a length of years; in fact, at his thirty-second year, he was reduced to the lowest ebb of distress, without health, confined to his bed, with scarcely any covering, and depending for subsistence on the usual means he had recourse to in his difficulties, writing letters to his friends in the usual stile of abject supplication. During this interval of miserable existence, which continued for six weeks, he occasionally found employment in the Magazines, and during these moments of occupation his whole figure and situation was truly ridiculous, could we forget the miseries attending it, for whenever he prepared himself for his task, he sat upright in his bed, wrapt himself up in his blanket (the only covering or clothing he was at that time master of) and thrusting his arm through a hole made for the purpose, and placing the paper on his knee, he scribbled whatever his fancy dictated. At length he was relieved from this state of distress, by the compassionate interference of a gentleman, who took his clothes out of the pawn-broker's, and enabled him to appear once more in public. In the year 1745, his wife died, while he was at Reading, compiling a review of the principal transactions of that period, including an account of the rebellion. This event seemed to have had a salutary effect upon his habits of life, as he became more systematic in his conduct, and seemed determined to abjure all his profligate habits; he even appears to have chosen a rank in life for himself, to which he intended to limit all his desires, as he now chose a wife from the lowest ranks of society, but one, who from her quiet demeanor, and regular habits, was likely to be a companion the best suited to his circumstances and situation. His habits became more regular, the employment of his time was arranged henceforward in a more systematic and useful manner, in writing for support, and endeavouring by exercise to restore a constitution shattered by disease and early dissipation. He had indeed proceeded so steadily in this plan of reformation, that those few friends whom compassion had still retained in his service, began to entertain the most sanguine hopes, that the brilliancy of his genius had still a chance of entertaining by its wit, and improving by its information; but all their hopes were soon blasted; his constitution had suffered too much from the irregularities of twenty years, to give any well-grounded prospect of existence lasting much longer, and after lingering for a few months, he expired in his 39th year, in the May of 1747, in a wretched garret near Shoe-lane, and before a collection could be made to defray the expense of giving his body a decent interment, it was hurried away by the parish officers, and buried without ceremony.

Boyse's appearance and manners were by no means prepossessing; to a clownishness of aspect and countenance, he added an inelegance of address, that made him shun those ranks in society, to which, from the pre-eminence of his genius, he had otherwise a right to aspire. To this perhaps might be attributed his prejudice in favour of low society, rather than to any natural inclination. He felt, and feelingly too, the consequence attached to a pleas-

ing address and appearance, and never cared to exhibit himself to those whose favour he wished to conciliate, except through a medium that could not excite their prejudices. Hence it was that his applications to the great were uniformly made by letter; and as he was naturally social (except in the moment of gratifying his gluttony) he fell into that society where he was liable to feel no restraint,

His publications are numerous, and are written with so much taste, and so much in the true spirit of poetry, that it may well be a matter of surprize they have not long since been published. His more considerable productions, and the times of their publication are as follow:

A Poem on Liberty, which was printed in the Dublin Journal, in	1726
The Tabula Cebetis	ditto.
The Tears of the Muses	Edin. 1732
Albion's Triumph	Lond. 1743
Translation of Fenelon's Existence of a God.	Lond. 1745
Attributes of the Deity, a Poem, particularly noticed in Harvey's Meditations,	1765
Recantation	1746

And many others on subjects of minor importance, the majority of which are interspersed in the Gentleman's Magazine, marked *Y*, and *Alcæus*.

LIFE OF THE EARL OF MACARTNEY.

GEORGE MACARTNEY, the descendant of a respectable family, which had settled in the county of Antrim in the year 1649, was born at the family mansion, at Lissanoure, in the year 1737. The early part of most lives are too uniform to afford much entertainment or instruction, and may in general be best passed over, unless we can discover the circumstances, often unimportant in themselves, that determine the bent by which the character of the man was afterwards swayed. At an early period of his life young Macartney was put under the care of a clergyman named Dennis, whose library consisted mostly of books of theology, together with a few on heraldry and genealogy. These last attracted the boy's attention, and the early exercise of his memory excited by them, strengthened it to a degree for which he was ever after remarkable. After passing through the usual course of academical studies, he finished his education according to the custom usual at that time, by a Continental tour. But when he thus conformed with the fashion of the day, he did not consider the tour in the same light as is too general, as the termination of a course of studies, and intended principally to wear off the habits acquired at colleges, but rather as the commencement of another course which was to prepare him for the part he afterwards designed to support in public. He visited most of the European courts, and acquired on the spot, an extensive and correct knowledge of their strength, resources, revenue and other points necessary for a politician to be acquainted with. Among other valuable acquaintances he then acquired, may be ranked the celebrated Voltaire, who not only expressed a strong degree of partiality towards him, but is said to have maintained a correspondence with him on his return to England.

He was soon afterwards returned to parliament for the borough of Midhurst, under the auspices of the Holland family. But he was soon called away from his parliamentary duty to one of a more important nature. After the revolution which placed Catherine II. on the throne of Russia, England was very desirous of forming an alliance with that power, principally from commercial views. The former commercial treaty had expired in the year 1734, during the reign of the Empress Elizabeth, who, though she declined renewing it, acquiesced in the continuation of its articles. But Catherine immediately after her accession, gave a positive denial, when pressed on the subject by Lord Buckingham, on the grounds that it was not intended to enter into an exclusive alliance with any power.

Under these circumstances was Sir George Macartney (for he received the honour of Knighthood on his appointment) selected to effect a treaty which had baffled the diplomatic skill of several former statesmen.—The preference was given him, not only on account of his knowledge of European politics, but through a hope that in a female court his external attractions and suavity of man-